GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:754
ANSWERED ON:28.11.2005
FOREST LAND FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SABARIMALA
Thomas Shri P.C.

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has decided to hand over some forest land for the purpose of the development of Sabarimala in Kerala ;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) whether some binding conditions are attached thereto; and

(d) if so, the details of the conditions and the manner in which they have to be complied with ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(a)&(b) The Travancore Devaswom Board is developing the areas in and around Sabarimala Temple for providing facilities to the pilgrims according to a Master Plan to be prepared by the State Government of Kerala. The State Government has engaged M/s. Eco-Smart (India) Limited for preparation of the said Master Plan. On the basis of the proposal received from the State Government as per the outline of the Master Plan prepared by M/s. Eco-Smart (India) Limited for development of Sabarimala, the Central Government has granted approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of 110.524 hectares of forest land at Nilakkal and 12.675 hectares in Periyar Tiger Reserve in favour of Travancore Devaswom Board. The detailed Master Plan is under preparation.

(c) Yes Sir.

(d) The details of the conditions imposed by the Central Government is enclosed as Annexure.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (d) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.754 ASKED BY SHRI P.C. THOMAS REGARDING `FOREST LAND FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SABARIMALA` DUE FOR REPLY ON 28.11.2005.

Conditions mentioned under the approval granted by the Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of 110.524 hectares of forest land at Nilakkal and 12.675 hectares in Periyar Tiger Reserve in Kerala in favour of Travancore Devaswom Board for development of Sabarimala Temple : -

1. Legal status of the forest land shall remain unchanged.

2. Compensatory Afforestation shall be raised and maintained by the State Forest Department at the project cost.

3. (i) All the activities in the diverted area shall be undertaken strictly according to the proposed Master Plan prepared by the State Government.

(ii) The forest land shall not be used for any purpose other than that specified in the Master Plan for the diverted area.

4. The non-forest land identified for raising Compensatory Afforestation shall be notified as Reserved Forest under Section-4 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927, or under the corresponding Section of the local Forest Act, by the State Government within six months.

5. Felling of trees shall be done only when it is unavoidable, and that too under strict supervision of the State Forest Department.

6. No damage to the flora and fauna of the area shall be caused.

7. It shall be ensured that during construction, labour-camps etc. are not set up on the forest land outside the diverted area.

8. Any other condition that the CCF (Central), Regional Office, Bangalore, may like to impose from time to time for protection and improvement of flora and fauna in the forest area, shall also be applicable.

9. The approval for diversion of 12.675 hectares of forest land in Periyar Tiger Reserve is subject to the final order to be passed by the Hon`ble Supreme Court of India in LA. No. 1373 in WP(C) No. 202 of 1995.